

REMARKS

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the Office action of 24 March 2005 by Examiner Kieu D. Vu.

Claims 1-6, 8-25, and 27-32 are in the case, none being allowed.

35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-9, 12-16, and 22-32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Salas et al ("Salas", U.S. Patent 6,233,600) and Underwood et al ("Underwood", U.S. Patent 6,601,057).

Applicants have amended each of the independent claims 1, 12, 23, 31, and 32 to make more clear the meaning of a theme (that is, a skin) and how such is used to render pages of collaboration space to a user interface in accordance with a plurality of predetermined modes of operation.

In the response to Applicants' arguments in the

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previous amendment (page 7 of the Office Action), the Examiner contends that

"In response to Applicant's argument that 'Salas does not teach skin group or theme as a collection of a plurality of layout files and a style sheet', it is noted that Salas teaches the skin group by teaching how components (elements, controls...) of a page will be displayed on a page (col 5, lines 38-67). Salas further teaches theme as a collection of a plurality of layout files and a style sheet (plurality of HTML files....to render HTML pages) (col 2, lines 28-37) (also col 7, lines 37-49)."

"In response to Applicant's argument that 'Salas does teaches (sic, teach) components, and does teach HTML, but does not teach the skin group, nor the new collaboration tags invented by applicants', it is noted that such is not the case."

"Salas teaches the skin group by teaching how components (elements, controls...) of a page will be displayed on a page (col 5, lines 38-67). Since web page is rendered by interpreting HTML tags (col 1, lines 35-45), these components should have corresponding tags to indicate to the browser how to display the components." [Office Action, page 7.]

As used by applicants, a theme is a skin - the terms are equivalent in the art. See, for example, the usage of

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these terms at URL <http://addons.mozilla.org/themes>, which states: "Themes are skins for Firefox. They allow you to change the look and feel of the user interface and personalize it to your tastes. A theme can simply change the colors of Firefox or it can change every piece of its appearance."

Applicants renew their assertion that while Salas does teach the layout on a page of HTML, he does not teach a skin group, or theme, as a collection of a predetermined plurality of layout files and a style sheet used for rendering collaboration space at the user interface of a browser in accordance with a plurality of predetermined modes of operation.

Applicants assert that teaching, as Salas does, how components of a page will be displayed on a page is not teaching skins or themes. The Examiner cites Salas, at columns 5, 2, and 7. This is what Salas teaches:

"The navigation bar 404 provides a number of controls for the viewer of the page. For example, in the page embodiment shown in FIG. 4, the navigation bar 404 provides eight commands; 'find,' 442 which performs a find fro a specified object; 'members,' 444 which permits certain users to change the membership list and

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access levels associated with members; 'create,' 446 which allows certain users to create new items and pages; 'edit,' 448 which allows certain users to edit eRoom pages; 'settings,' 450 which permits settings for the display and management of eRooms to be changed; a question mark icon 452 which invokes a help system; a 'next unread' icon 454 which displays to the viewer an unread item or file; and an up-arrow icon 456 which displays the 'parent' of the eRoom currently being viewed, that is, it displays an eRoom page one logical level 'up' from the currently viewed eRoom page."

"The graphical element 406 is used to pictorially identify the viewed page. The graphical element 406 may be a corporate logo or other organizational identifier. The graphical element 406 may be static (as depicted in FIG. 4) or it may be a dynamic identifier such as a JAVA script or ActiveX control."

"The item box 408 collects and displays items associated with the project represented by the page 402. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 4, the item box 408 contains a folder of items 482, a notes file 486, a spreadsheet file 488, and a word processing file 490, each of these being links to other eRoom pages or files. Other items which may be displayed in an item box 408 are version organizers, discussion, links, and vote/poll pages which survey team membership on one or more issues..." [Col. 5, lines 37-68.]

Applicants traverse the Examiners suggestion that Salas teaches in the above quoted material the concept of a theme

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(or skin). It is apparent that here Salas is merely setting forth how components of a page will be rendered (Figure 4 is a page), and does not teach how a skin group defines what is included and the look and feel for various modes to something that already exists (that is, in the present invention, pages contained with collaboration space). Applicants invention provides for the use of skins in rendering pages collaboration space.

The Examiner also refers to Salas, columns 2 and 7, for the teaching of a "theme as a collection of a plurality of layout files and a style sheet (plurality of HTML files....to render HTML pages). This is what Salas states:

"In another aspect, the invention relates to a system for allowing user to collaborate on a shared project using an HTML file server. A project database is stored on the HTML file server and contains information related to the shared project. Each client workstation locally stores a subset database which includes information related to the project which is relevant to that user's effort on the project. A plurality of HTML files is used in connection with the stored project information to render HTML pages for display to the user." [Salas, Col. 2, lines 28-37.]

"The template section above specifies the folder template's name ('Folder'), thumbnail, default icon,

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and identifying text (blurb). 'OpenOnCreate' specifies that folders are not automatically opened when created, and 'Suffix' and 'SuffixPl' control the text that appears with the child count in the size column when a folder appears in an item box. DYNAMIC sections allow the template creator to add properties to a page that are not standard template properties. For example, in the example above, Suffix, SuffixPl, OpenOnCreate, and Blurb have been added to this template by the template creator. The following is an exemplary list of various template properties that may be used in embodiments of their invention:..." [Salas, Col. 7, lines 37-49.]

Applicants traverse the asserted characterization of these teaching of Salas. There is no teaching here of a theme, which includes a predetermined set of layout files, each layout file including a plurality of components arranged according to predetermined modes, as that is set forth in applicants' claims:

"...said theme including a style sheet and a group of layout files, with a layout file for each of a plurality of view modes of operation... each of a plurality of ... components comprising selectively HTML and Java script contained within a skin component tag".

Applicants introduce this concept of a skin group, or theme, which is a way of specifying a plurality of different layout files of HTML and skin components for a plurality of

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modes of viewing, to the rendering at a user interface of collaboration space. These layout files comprising a theme render collaboration space to the user interface, and a plurality of such themes may be selected and personalized by the user for selecting, positioning, and rendering each of the skin components for several coordinated modes.

Thus, in applicants' preferred embodiment, a skin group (theme) is five skins (these five skins are referred to in applicants' specification and claims as layout files) plus a style sheet. A skin (that is, layout file) is a specific layout of skin components destined to be used in these five modes: viewing document, editing document, listing document, showing document in slides, and showing documents as headlines, together with a style sheet for determining colors and formats to use for the various skin components. These layout files (or skins) and style sheet comprise a skin group (also referred to in applicants' specification and currently amended claims as a theme), a preferred embodiment of which is set forth in Table 18.

Applicants set forth in Table 19 of their specification examples of skin components used by a user in creating the layouts of a theme, or skin group. These skin components

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are composites of HTML tags specified by a user using custom tags specific to his application, a group of these HTML tags for a skin component being contained within a skin component tag. When a user creates skins, he deals with skin component tags, not just HTML tags. Skin component tags are converted by the server to HTML tags when rendered.

As previously noted, Salas describes how HTML works. Applicants do use HTML. However, skin components are not merely HTML tags. Examples of such are set forth in Table 19. They are defined and rendered to users in layout files, one such file for each display mode (where they may be selected and positioned by the user.)

Examples of applicants' skin components are title (or, logo) 342, side bar (or, table of contents) 346, page content 350, action bar 344, and tool bar 348. (Specification, page 67, lines 10-14, and Table 18 at page 75ff.) Applicants skin component tags represent components of collaboration space, and these tags are used to do the layout of that space for each of the display modes of a theme.

Further, applicants invention provides for skins, which

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use HTML to layout components of collaboration space in a user defined way. In a specific embodiment of applicants' invention, six elements or modes define a skin group, or theme: five skins, or layout files, and a style sheet, the skins being page view, page edit, list folder view, headline folder view, and slide show folder view. ("Theme" is customer friendly term given to "skin group".) (Specification, page 69, lines 1-5, and Table 19, at page 77.)

Applicants note that in their preferred embodiment, six elements define a skin group. Applicants skin components are different from Salas' components. Salas' components are elements and controls defined by the HTML specification. Applicants' skin components are constructed by using multiple HTML tags contained within skin component tags. That is, applicants group HTML tags to represent a logical skin component.

Salas does teach components, and does teach HTML, but does not teach skin group, nor the new collaboration component tags invented by applicants. The Examiner, in merely stating "it is noted that such is not the case", gives no basis for his conclusion. [See Office Action, page

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7, lines 11-13.]

Applicants are not claiming that they invented HTML, components, editing or viewing pages, but rather that they invented an edit mode and several view modes that each use a user defined layout file (that is, skin) that specifies how skin components are laid out and what styles are used.

Applicants invention combines four basic elements as follows:

1. New collaboration component tags. (Specification, page 73, lines 14-73, page 82, line 14 to page 88, line 17.)
2. End user creation of a skin, which is a group of these component tags, arranged in HTML for each of a plurality of modes of operation. (Specification, page 69, lines 1-5, and Table 19, at page 77.)
3. End user definition of skin group, or theme, as a collection of skins for all the modes of operation (examples of modes being edit mode and view mode), together with a style which applies to all the skins in the skin group. (Specification, page 71, line 9 to

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page 73, line 8, and page 73, line 14 to page 74, line 15.)

4. End user importation of the skin group into collaboration space. (Specification, page 66, lines 5-17 page 70, lines 9-14 and page 73, lines 17-18.)

With respect to claim 1, the Examiner cites Underwood (Col. 3, lines 55-58, col. 5, lines 15-26, col. 23, lines 60-67, and col. 24, lines 1-15) as teaching user definition of which skin components to use and their respective locations. This is what Underwood teaches:

"Accordingly, it is an object of this invention to provide an improved method and apparatus for web site generation that harnesses and coordinates all the resources required for creating, updating and maintaining a quality web site." [Col. 3, lines 55-59.]

"The Definer in accordance with the invention includes various modules, including a site provider (Site Definer) for defining the structure, content and embedded applications of a web site, a framework provider (Framework Definer) which provides various layout variations for a web site, an image provider (Image Definer) which allows for the selection and maintenance of various images on a web site, a Project

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Manager which coordinates the three prior Definer Publishing products to produce a professional multi-dimensional web site solution, and a web provider (Web Definer) which is the end-user tool that allows a user to select various combinations and to edit the web site." [Col. 5, lines 15-26.]

"FIG. 43 illustrates an 'Image Options' drop-down menu 4305 that is displayed when an image in WYSIWYG Panel area 4205 is clicked. As shown in FIG 43, the 'Image Options' include: 'Insert Image Before' for inserting an image before the selected image (selecting this option prompts for uploading an image); 'Replace This Image' for replacing the selected image (selecting this option prompts for uploading an image); 'Insert Image After' for inserting an image before the selected image (selecting this option prompts for uploading an image); 'Edit Image Attributes' for specifying the attributes for the selected image (a menu, which will be described in detail below, is displayed upon selection of this option); 'Delete This Image' for deleting the selected image; 'Edit Page Background' for editing an existing background image; 'Put Logo Here' for including a logo uploaded by a user and specifying restrictions for displaying the logo with the selected image (a menu, which will be described in detail below, is displayed upon selection of this option); and 'Insert Background For This Set' for inserting a background image for the table cell comprising the selected image (this is important because a background image for the table cell completes the ability for a Web site to scale when viewed in various resolutions)

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(selecting this option prompts for uploading an image).
[Underwood, Col. 23, line 59 to Col. 24, line 15.]

Applicants traverse the Examiner's characterization of Underwood, for there is no teaching here of skin components, and of a theme for rendering a collaboration space in a predetermined plurality of modes. Applicants amendments to the independent claims further defines what is meant by skin components, which are selective HTML and Java Script contained within skin component tags.

And, further, Underwood does not teach rendering at a UI pages of collaboration space in accordance with a predetermined set of view modes, each view mode defined by a predetermined set of layout files containing such skin components.

Applicants request that claims 1-6, 8-9, 12-16, 22-25, and 27-32 be allowed.

Claims 10-11, 17-19, and 21-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Salas, Underwood, and Van Der Meer (U.S. Patent 6,415,316).

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Claim 20 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Salas, Underwood, Van Der Meer, and Noguchi (U.S. Patent 5,983,184).

Claims 10 and 11 depend from claim 1, claims 17-19 and 20-21 depend from claim 12. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended as previously discussed to clarify the distinction with respect to Salas and Underwood. Neither Noguchi nor Van Der Meer, nor their combination with Salas and Underwood, teach applicants' method or system as currently amended.

Applicants request that claims 10-11, 17-19 and 20-21 be allowed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants urge that the above amendments be entered and the case passed to issue with claims 1-6, 8-25, and 27-32.

The Application is believed to be in condition for

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allowance and such action by the Examiner is urged. Should differences remain, however, which do not place one/more of the remaining claims in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned at the number provided below for the purpose of providing constructive assistance and suggestions in accordance with M.P.E.P. Sections 707.02(j) and 707.03 in order that allowable claims can be presented, thereby placing the Application in condition for allowance without further proceedings being necessary.

Sincerely,

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